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THE

MONTHLY



GULL

BULLETIN

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AFRICAN LANDSCAPE

An exciting program is planned for the regular monthly meeting of Golden Gate Audubon Society on **Thursday, December 10, 1970**, at the **Hall of Flowers** in Golden Gate Park, S. F. starting at **7:30 p.m.** **Mr. Ted Papenfuss**, Research Herpatologist with the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park, will present an African journey in slides and narration, **"From The Sahara Desert To The Rain Forest."** Mr. Papenfuss recently spent a year in Africa collecting reptiles and doing research for the Academy; this program is the story of that journey as he crossed the entire width of Africa from east to west- the landscape, the land, the animals, the people, the ecology. A fascinating view of the kind of research adventure many of us wish we could experience! **Be sure to come.**

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM COMING JANUARY 11

Save **Jan. 11, 1971, 8:15 p.m.** for the next Audubon Wildlife Film presentation, **"Acadian Reflections"** by **Robert E. Fultz**, who was for many years a Ranger Naturalist with the National Park Service. The setting for the film is the Acadia National Park in Maine - the only National Park in New England. Details in January *Gull*.

PELICAN MIGRATION STUDY

Be on the lookout for Brown Pelicans painted pink, yellow, or green with streamers tied to their legs. The State Fish and Game Dept. states that the U.S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife banded young birds at three different nesting colonies in the Gulf of California. Purpose is to study their migratory habits. The colors are painted on the white abdomen feathers; streamers are four inches long. Report sightings to the Wildlife Research Center in Denver, Colorado. (This study may be of importance in view of the DDT pollution disaster to this great bird - or it may be too late anyhow.-Ed.)

OAKLAND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT INFORMATION

The date of the **Oakland Christmas Count** is **January 3, 1971**. The bird count this year is of crucial importance in view of a quickly deteriorating environment especially along bay, coast, and river systems, re: DDT, mercury poisoning, etc. Also, for the first time, the Point Reyes Bird Ob-

servatory with the cooperation of the **Bay Area Audubon Council**, will start keeping permanent records of the annual circum-Bay count. These records will produce important information for primary and secondary analysis year by year.

Compiler of the Oakland Christmas Count is **Eugene Hunn**, who asks all interested people to call **848-8982** or write him at **2131 Rose St., Berkeley CA 94709** for assignment. A number of volunteers have already called and more are needed, both experienced birders and those with less experience.

MAP. Mr. Hunn has prepared a typographical map of the entire area divided into 30 count areas. The center of our area is around Piedmont; the eastern boundary includes St. Mary's College at Moraga; the northern boundary inland is at Briones Park and San Pablo Reservoir. The western (Bay) boundary includes Treasure Island. Two boats will be available for the Treasure Island count. Along the Bay shore, the count will go as far south as the San Leandro boundary and north along the shore to Richmond at Point Isabel. The count also includes all of Tilden Park and Lake Anza.

EACH group of birders will be assigned to cover two areas, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Each of these areas will be in a different habitat, for variety and interest to the birders. All 30 areas should be covered.

BEFORE THE COUNT

A Preliminary Planning Meeting will be held before the count on **December 17, 1970 at 7:30 p.m.** at the home of **Mr. Hunn, 2131 Rose St., Berkeley**. All participants should attend this meeting, especially the more experienced birders who will lead groups.

The evening before the count, that is on **January 2, 1971**, Mr. Hunn will remain at home all evening to receive calls and visits from people who are not sure of where they should go, or who need to receive assignments. The **MAP** will be available for all to see the exact location of any assignment. (Jan 2 is also the Pt. Reyes count, for those who participate in both counts.)

AFTER THE COUNT

People who count birds on **January 3, 1971**, are invited to gather for dinner and a gathering of reports at **6:30 p.m.** at the home of the Falgatters, **406 El Cerrito Avenue, Piedmont**. Please phone Mrs. Erickson at **832-2330** by **December 30** if you plan to come for dinner. Or drop a card to the Falgatters.

Correction, November Gull: Bio-Sonar Lab in Coyote Hills Regional Park open house will be: first Saturdays, **March, April, May and June only**.

OTHER COUNT DATES - BAAC CHAPTERS

December 26. Mt Diablo Audubon, Lynn Farrar, Compiler. (NOT Dec. 20.)

December 27. Ohlone Audubon (Hayward area) and Madrone Audubon (Santa Rosa area.)

January 2. Pt. Reyes (Marin Co.) Jack Guggolz, Compiler, 234-4298.
For Sequoia Audubon (San Mateo Arca) call Alice Steele, 344-8317.

COVEL'S CONSERV-ECOLOGY CORNER

Good News should open a Christmas or Year-end's column, and we've just discovered it in the local press: State Water Resources Director Gianelli has announced that the Peripheral Canal might wait until 1980, due to the slow-down in state population growth. For this we should thank Mr. Gianelli, and all those who have contributed to this decrease in California's growth rate!

More good news, if we may so term a stay of execution, came in Secretary Hickel's "clarification" of a Presidential order of August issue . . . which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and thousands of conservationists took as a directive to list 10% of Federal wildlife refuge lands for surplus sale. The Secretary declared that refuge lands as well as national parks and monuments would be exempt.

A mild rebuke to President Nixon in our October column concerning his directive which appeared to over-ride the wishes of conservationists and of Congress toward increasing timber harvesting, did arouse at least one Republican reader who took it as a political attack. It was not so intended— but only as a polite reminder to "Our Man in the White House." We expect any man who occupies that high office to listen to the top environmental advisers he himself appoints, and to be consistent in his actions and expressions, whether it be natural resource harvests, SST'S or big business he must oppose.

In this particular matter, the President did direct the **Deputy Chief of the U.S. Forest Service** to answer our letter. The Forest Service assures us that no increased harvest beyond the sustained yield capacity will be permitted, nor destruction of environmental quality or multiple use objectives. So now it behooves us all to watch.

Wish we could quote the entire commentary by **John Zierold**, Sacramento representative for the **Sierra Club**, concerning the past legislative session. Here are a few highlights, taken out of text: "The year 1970 was to have marked the beginning of the Age of Ecology . . . Deep alarm over a threatened environment, as well as high media interest in ecology, gave wing to that hope and promoted legislators from virtually every hue in the political spectrum to issue almost joyously worded promises of help for the beleaguered habitat . . . What subsequently happened at the 1970 session in Sacramento is most charitably described as a miracle of amnesia." (end of quotes.)

Conservation measures which did finally emerge from the last session were: **SCA 18**, which would allow diversion of highway monies for mass

transit and air pollution research-subject to ratification by the voters; a conservation education bill appropriating \$700,000 for school programs in ecology; and a bill requiring public agencies to undertake environmental impact studies on all projects. **Did you let your own legislators know how you felt about the various bills dealing with environmental issues during that session?**

American Eagles in Maine are losing out in reproductive efforts to the DDT cycle, just like the Brown Pelicans of the California Coast, according to recent surveys by Audubon and U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologists. **Twenty-two nests out of 30 yielded no hatches!** And a pitiful coyote carcass hung on a fence rail near Susanville last month revealed to this roving reporter that some California ranchers still need a lot of enlightenment. —PAUL F. COVEL, *Conservation Chairman*.

FIELD TRIPS FOR DECEMBER

Sat. Dec. 5—To Conn Dam in Napa County at **8:30 a.m.** Drive to the town of Napa. Stay on Freeway till you come to Trancas Street. Turn right about a mile where the road intersects the Silverado Trail. We will bird there at the bridge for ½ hour. Caravan will leave for Conn Dam at **9 a.m.** sharp. Leaders, Marie Mans and Peter Allen.

Sun. Dec. 6—Same trip, same time, same place. Leader, Larry Curl.

Wed. Dec. 9—To Rodeo Lagoon from **9 to 12**, lunch optional. Cross Golden Gate Bridge, take the Sausalito exit, in ¾ mile, turn left. Go through tunnel and wait in parking lot at the other end. Leader, Mrs. Bud Fry.

Sat. Dec. 12—To Spring Lake, San Mateo Water Co. Meet at San Andreas Dam at **9 a.m.** Bring lunch. Starting from Sloat and Skyline Blvd., go through one stop sign and 7 signals to Trousdale Street. From here, follow directions carefully or you'll be lost on the freeway. Exit at Trousdale, make a U Turn through underpass, and up on the Freeway again. Exit at Millbrae Ave., go through underpass at the San Jose sign and straight ahead through the gate for one mile to the Dam. Leader, Pat Triggs.

Sun. Dec. 20—Lake Merritt in Oakland. A good place for beginners to see the birds at close range. Meet at **9:30 a.m.** at the Rotary Science Center in Lakeside Park at Bellevue and Perkins. Leader, Paul Covell.

Sat. Dec. 26—Come out for a short post-Christmas bird trip. Meet at the East end of the Fort Cronkhite tunnel (see Rodeo Lagoon directions.) Do **NOT** go through the tunnel. We will caravan at the starting point at **9:30 a.m.** Be prepared to walk a mile or more.

Save **Jan. 2 and 3** for the Christmas Count. Save **Jan. 9** for Dillon Beach.

—PATRICIA TRIGGS

NEW "GULL" EDITOR NEEDED

As of the November issue, Violet Homem has resigned the editorship of the *GULL* for reasons of health, and a new editor is needed. Have you

always wanted to write, or edit a newsletter? This is your chance. We will be happy to give any advice or instructions needed to get you started. If you wish to volunteer for this important post, please call Josh Barkin, **524-2495**. You are needed starting with the January Gull. That means—**NOW**. Pearl Barkin is pinch-hitting as temporary editor, for December only.

THANK YOU

It has been the practice of Golden Gate Audubon over the years to express its thanks to hard-working board members and volunteers at the Annual Dinner which occurs at year's end in June. However, recently new volunteers have come upon the scene and some of our old favorite people have changed jobs or resigned. It seems a shame to wait a whole year to say Thank You.

Why not say it now?

Thanks, from the Board and members, to Mrs. Violet Homem, for the hard work and faithful service she has rendered in editing the *Gull* each month and seeing that it arrived at the printer's on time! Vi has been Editor since July 1963, after a year as assistant editor. She has done a great job. *Note from printer:* Vi Homem is one of the nicest people with whom we have ever had the good fortune to work.

And **Thanks** to Mrs. Valeria DaCosta, who has given many years of service and unflagging interest to Golden Gate Audubon, both in her former job, since 1962, as Membership Chairman and, since 1965, as Field Trips Chairman, including the very successful pelagic trips as well. This has been quite a load to carry. Many members and friends have enjoyed the one-day trips to local areas as well as the weekend trips to Yosemite and other places.

As Field Trips Chairman, Val has also been responsible for the safety and enjoyment of many visitors and Audubonites, on their ocean trips off Monterey and the Farallones. These trips have attracted visitors and birders from many parts of the United States, as well as foreign visitors — for whom, of course Val has also acted as Hostess. Val has resigned as Field and Boat Trips Chairman, but she can look back at this work with a deep sense of accomplishment.

Throughout Val's trips, her basic thesis and question to all participants has been, "What role are **You** playing in the fight for Conservation?"

And **Thanks** to Patricia Triggs, new Field Trips Chairman, and to Helen Roller, new unofficial program chairman. Mrs. Roller is doing an excellent job of lining up interesting programs for our regular monthly meetings. Pat Triggs has a list of exciting field trips for the coming months. And **Thanks** also to those members not mentioned here who are still putting in lots of time and effort for **Conservation** and the Golden Gate Audubon Society!

OBSERVATIONS CALENDAR

- Oct. 1—Wood Duck, Las Trampas Creek, Lafayette—Harry C. Adamson. Mr. Adamson notes that many years ago this was not uncommon, but that today "I thought it would make a worthy observation."
- Oct. 1—Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) seen soaring at about 200 feet, east of Solano County Fairgrounds, Vallejo—Mr. and Mrs. Roy E. Koski.
- Oct. 20—Mrs. Violet Homem, retiring Gull editor, writes, "From my bedroom and kitchen windows today I have enjoyed seeing a Downy Woodpecker, Mockingbird, Ruby-crowned Kinglets (showing a ruby), Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, Wrentit at hummingbird feeder, Titmouse, House finches, Song Sparrows, White-crowned Sparrows, Oregon Juncos, Brown Towhees, Anna's Hummingbird, Stellar's Jay, Scrub Jay, Mourning Dove, Hermit Thrush, and Rufous-sided Towhee. Love, Vi." **YOU CAN'T KEEP A GOOD BIRDER DOWN.**
- Sept. 29—Adult Ferruginous Hawk on Point Reyes Peninsula—Valeria DaCosta, Tom Chamberlain.
- Oct. 10—Broad-winged Hawk going into adult plumage at Rodeo Lagoon—Bob and Val DaCosta.
- Oct. 17—Six Elegant Terns at Rodeo Lagoon, fewer than in other years, when as many as 100 were sighted. Bob and Val DaCosta.

Point Reyes Trip. On Oct. 10-11 we had a beautiful but foggy weekend on Pt. Reyes Peninsula. On Saturday the group was divided into 2 parts, one group going to Drake's Beach and the other to Tomales Point. The Drake's Beach birders saw Red-throated Loons, Marsh Hawks, Osprey, Barn Owls, numerous Western Bluebirds and a tropical Kingbird. At Tomales Point we saw Redtail, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks. Many Brandts and Cormorants, a Great Horned Owl, Bewick's and Winter Wrens. The top bird was a Black Oystercatcher.

Sunday was spent at Limantour. We almost didn't get through the gate; the key wouldn't fit. But after a few panicky moments, a gentleman appeared from somewhere who seemed to know how to cope with cantankerous locks, especially this one, and he unlocked it for us. We birded around the two lakes and the Estuary. At the lakes we saw greater Yellow Legs, Marbled Godwits, Dowitchers, a Yellow Throat, lesser and American Goldfinch, Pintails, Widgeons. On the Estuary were the usual gulls, sanderlings, Great Blue Herons, surf scoters, and many Common Loons. Altogether we had a total of 92 birds.

Bear Valley Trip. On Oct. 17, a small but enthusiastic group of birders met at the Bear Valley Ranger Station. While waiting for the group to gather, two large flocks of Canada Geese flew overhead, winging their way South. The short trippers were all new birders. We took the Wood-

pecker Trail and the Earthquake Trail, obtaining a list of 20 birds—Acorn and Hairy Woodpeckers, Pine Siskins, Townsend Warblers, Hermit Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and an abundance of Winter Wrens. The long trippers led by Glen Ellwood, walked the 4 miles to the ocean, obtaining a total of 40 birds - Golden-crowned Kinglets, Anna's Hummer, Bewick's Wren, Says and Black Phoebe, Yellow-bellied Sapsueker, and on the ocean, Western Grebes, Brandts and pelagic Cormorants, White winged Scoters and loons.

Sunol Regional Park. On Oct. 25, fifty birders turned out to see the Golden Eagles. We had a good climb to get up high enough to see them, but we were well rewarded for our efforts by an excellent view of at least four of them. We saw Redtails, Western Bluebirds, Lark Sparrows, Says Phoebe and dozens of Yellow-billed Magpies.

—PATRICIA TRIGGS, *Field Trips Chairman*

Point Reyes National Seashore. On Oct. 24 a group of young people met with George Peyton for a twelve mile hike to Mt. Whittenberg, down the Sky Trail to the coast, along the beach, and baek by way of Bear Valley Trail. Sea eaves were visited. It was a beautiful day and the hike was enjoyed by the participants. The purpose was to view the entire ecology of the area as well as to observe birds. (More hikes for young people should be held.-Ed.)

OAKLAND MUSEUM PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

Mr. Hubert Dafoe of the Natural Sciences Division ealls our attention to an important current show which will run **through December**. The **Underwater Photographic Society**, concerned with pollution of our coastal waters, has assembled an exhibit on Cousteau's theme, "The Oceans are Dying." "The Exhibition depicts, through panel-sized photographs, the drastic ravages of pollution along the California coastline . . . There are also dramatic underwater photographs of healthy marine plants and animal life . . ." Slides and films will be shown during the exhibition. Too bad we missed the Nov. 20 showing of slides about the only surviving Brown Pelican chick hatched last year on Anacapa Island; perhaps it will be shown again?

MEMORIAL GIFTS

A Gift of Remembrance was made to **Audubon Canyon Ranch:**
In Memory of: *Gift of:*
Mrs. Grace Shuman Mr. K. M. Nikaido
A Gift of Remembrance was made to **Audubon Nature Training:**
In Memory of: *Gift of:*
Mrs. Leah Hoffman Mr. K. M. Nikaido
and
Col. Earl Halstead Mr. K. M. Nikaido
—DR. ALBERT BOLES, *Sanctuary & Memorial Fund Chairman*



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Established January 25, 1917 A Branch of the National Audubon Society since 1948

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Bay Area Audubon Council (BAAC)

Delegates: Joshua Barkin, George Peyton, Jr., Mrs. Richard F. Johnson (addresses above)

Send address changes to Membership Secretary promptly; Post Office does not forward THE GULL
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High school & college student membership \$6 per year.

The Gull deadline is the first of the month for the following month.